

# BitterSweet

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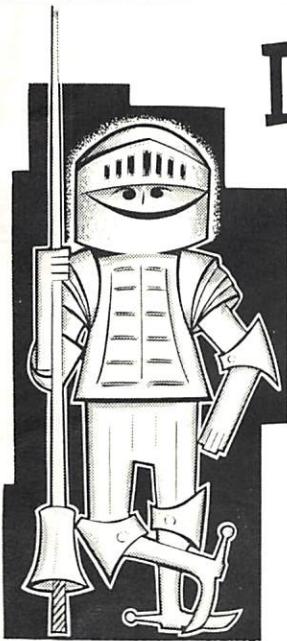
March, 1978 The Magazine of Maine's Hills & Lakes Region

Vol. 1 No. 5



Finlandia

John Pottle: Otisfield's Dean of Town Meeting



# IRON CLAD...

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robert l. milton  
INSURANCE AGENCY

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Dear Peter,

Mar. '78

I'm gettin' itchy for Spring to arrive. It may be the long johns that ain't been off since Thanksgiving. Those, along with that snow should set wood splittin' stuff you sold me have saved some oil though - Mister! I've never sweat so much in my life. Me an' the wife are looking forward to our Spring Fling at the PARIS FARMERS UNION.

Bert

P.S. How's that new barn comin'?

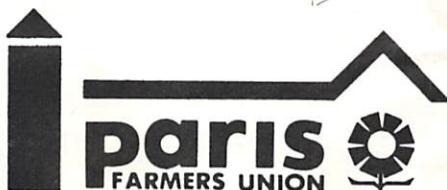
Bert,

We're looking forward to seeing you. I think that stove you got here last fall will burn long johns - give it a try before you come in.

March isn't too early to think about your garden. We've got an excellent selection of starter plants + seeds in bulk or packets. There are peat pots to start them in + soil conditioner + plant food to ensure results.

Instead of just sitting around itching for things to grow why not paint the old place up? We've got MASURY paint + MINWAX stains, brushes to put it on with + solvents to clean up the mess. There is even bug repellent to make working comfortable. Tell your wife some flowers would look nice with the new paint job - we've got a large assortment of bulbs.

Peter.



16 Skillings Ave. - South Paris - 743-8977  
410 Center Street - Auburn - 783-1366

P.S. The barn's looking good. Be ready in April.

*John Pottle:*

# *Otisfield's Dean of Town Meeting*

**His tireless devotion to the needs of the town have brought him the status of Town Manager, the function of Town Father and the honor of Town Historian, all rolled into one.**



*John Pottle with antique ballot box*

*by Cathy Flynn*

You might say that John Pottle has fathered the town of Otisfield.

After all, at 82, Pottle has produced, authored or notarized nearly every official town document, including most deeds and mortgages.

He has overseen the drafting of ordinances and guidelines for Otisfield's 600 taxpayers. It is *his* knowledge that the people here rely on; his recall that they turn to in a pinch.

In fact, for a lot of Otisfield villagers, John Pottle is the town's greatest asset.

With a lifetime of teaching behind him and a knack for keen, tactful leadership, he has garnered the almost awesome devotion of an entire community.

When the citizens of Otisfield gather at the community hall this month for their annual town meeting, it will be, without a doubt, Pottle who will wield the gavel. (Last year he used a soda bottle because someone

The pros and cons of penicillin, the connection between gas pains and heart attacks and the ins and outs of choosing a family physician are concerns every bit as vital to us Mainers as picking the proper garden vegetable variety and digging a new well, writes Dr. Michael Lacombe in "Consumerism in Medicine" (pg. 30), the beginning of a new monthly magazine feature entitled "Medicine For The Hills."

According to Dr. Lacombe, however, most Mainers are more adept at tending crops and livestock than they are looking after their own bodies.

A practicing physician with Norway's Oxford Hills Internal Medicine Group and a member of the newly-formed Oxford Hills Health Education Project Steering Committee, Dr. Lacombe has set out to offer down-to-earth information designed to foster consumerism on the part of readers regarding total health care by suggesting ways for them to shop for health services; what it is they should look for and when they should buy; and most importantly, at what time and in what ways they ought to tackle things themselves.

Other newcomers to the pages of **BitterSweet** this month are Esther L. Smith whose article on culinary ways to welcome spring (pg. 22) is as tantalizing as it is informative; Lucretia Douglas of West Baldwin whose fish chowder recipe is incorporated into Mrs. Smith's article and whose tips for using wood stove ashes appear as a Sweet Find on (pg. 29); C. C. Matolcsy, whose thoughts on last month's mighty blizzard are this issue's Reader's Room contribution (pg. 42); and poets Georgia Robertson of Buckfield and Winslow Durgin of Minot.

As a tribute to this month's town meeting ritual, Cathy Flynn talked with John Pottle of Otisfield, who has chaired his town's annual assemblies for the past 42 years (pg. 6).

Pat White Gorrie spent a chilly February morning with Edward Arthur Woodworth of Norway, admiring his handsome hand-crafted furniture and talking shop with the retired woodworker beside his pot-bellied stove (pg. 14).

I managed to get as far afield as West Paris to meet with Selectman Hugo Heikkinen and State Representative Jake Immonen as background for a beginning series on the Finnish community (pg. 10) - where hard work and a healthy dose of *sisu* has paid such high dividends that we could all stand a share.

*Sandy Wilhelm*

# APRIL ISSUE

## PEDDLER PAGE

### "For Sale" Items

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# BitterSweet

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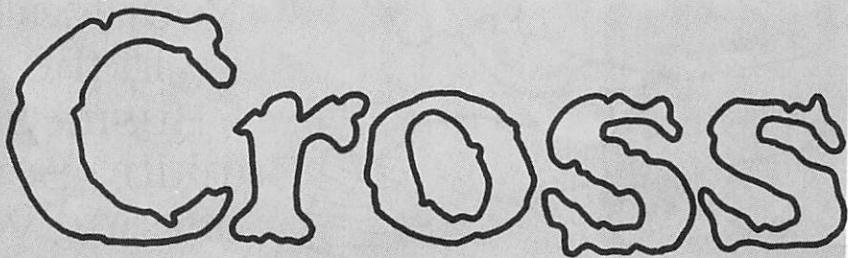
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A large, stylized, hand-drawn outline of the word "CROSS" in a blocky, rounded font. The letters are thick and irregular, giving them a textured, organic appearance.

## **CREDITS**

Illustrations: Page 18-20, Duncan Slade; Page 22,26-27, Paula McKenney;  
Photos: Page 6, Cathy Flynn; Page 7, Bill Haynes; Pages 12,14-17, 30, 39, Sandy  
Wilhelm.

Cover Photo: Tapping Trees by D. Gilpatrick

*Starting a Business or Buying?*

*See Oxford Bank & Trust*



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Pottle improvises, using an empty coke bottle in place of a gavel at last summer's special town meeting, under the approving eye of Town Clerk Barbara Kane.

forgot to bring the traditional mallet.) It will be his 43rd year as town meeting moderator and, although his wife tells him he is too old to preside again, Pottle says he will continue taking his time-honored place at the front of the hall so long as he is able.

"He's always right on the money," says a long-time friend who sees Pottle as an old-fashioned arbiter who believes in — above all — keeping things honest.

"He knows the job of moderator inside and out," says another frequent town meeting-goer. "I'd call him one of best."

According to the town's 1974 annual report, which was dedicated to Pottle, the teacher-turned-politician can be counted upon to maintain "the decorum required to effectively iron out the differences and soothe the ruffled feelings" which often arise during the heat of town meeting

debates.

How does he orchestrate a smooth town meeting and still cover the 60 or so articles included in the town warrant? He sums up the key to being a good moderator:

"You don't allow everyone to talk at once — that's the secret. Everyone should have a right to their opinion, but they should always address the moderator before speaking out. Sometimes, people get forgetful and they have to be told they're out of order."

In Otisfield, business is usually finished in one day, according to Pottle, with an hour out at noontime, "so the ladies can serve their dinner."

With or without gavel in hand, Pottle's manner is unhurried and sedate. He relaxes in an easy chair in the mobile home where he and his wife, the former Sarah McMannus, have lived since 1972. Their residence is less than a mile from the centuries-old cape cod house where they spent much of their married life. Suffering from asthma, Mrs. Pottle, who will turn 81 this month, found the old house too difficult to keep up.

Pottle has just come in from shoveling snow off the roof of their trailer, and the ice melts off his rubber clasped boots as he talks.

He was born John Kemp Pottle in Lovell, where his parents lived after both graduating in the same Bridgton Academy Class of 1893. When he was still a toddler, the family moved to Otisfield, his mother's home town.

As the oldest of six children, the 19-year-old boy pitched in to help when his father died in 1914. He worked on and off in the woods, at sawmills, and at scattered teaching jobs until, after seven years, he could complete a four-year teaching program at Colby College.

"When I first started teaching in Otisfield Gore, I drove a horse in a two-seated wagon to school every day and picked up scholars along the way. I taught and did janitorial work for \$10 a week," he says, adjusting his well-worn suspenders as he talks.

He went on to become submaster (today's equivalent of assistant principal) of the Ricker Classical Institute in Houlton. He taught geometry, algebra, science, bookkeeping, or, according to him, "or no one else wanted to teach."

He taught at Hebron Academy, where Sarah were houseparents for a year he got a chance to

become principal of the Lee Normal Academy (located about 60 miles north of Bangor.)

"I kinda wanted to get back to that part of the world," he recalls. "I didn't really care about being part of a big school. I wanted to go to Lee because I could run it as I saw fit."

In the four years under his principalship, the school's enrollment grew from 55 to more than 100.

Itchy to get back "downstate" to be nearer his family, Pottle accepted a principal's job at Winthrop High School.

"There were a lot of teachers around at that time," he says. "It was hard to get enough money to live on."

To supplement his family income, Pottle also worked for the Phoenix Life Insurance Co. In the middle of the Depression years, he jumped at the opportunity to become principal of Mechanic Falls High School, where he taught for 12 years.

"He was an outstanding teacher," says Daniel Callahan, now 62, who studied under Pottle in Mechanic Falls. "I liked the way he would illustrate mathematical axioms so they would stick in your mind. I've always appreciated him more since I got out of school. I've been a contractor ever since and I can say I learned something in his class."

Callahan remembers Pottle as a stern disciplinarian who knew how to use diplomacy to his best advantage. He recalls the time he accidentally knocked Pottle's papers from his arms. When the boy nervously picked them up and returned them, Pottle told him he was too perturbed at that moment to deal with the situation, but said he would settle the issue at a later date.

"I was on my best behavior for weeks," Callahan says. "Pottle told me years later that if he had punished me right on the spot, I would have been back misbehaving again the next day."

Pottle's friends say he has always made the most of his time, either "doing for himself," or going without.

"We built a place in Mechanic Falls," Pottle continues. "It was a pretty good house."

It was there in Mechanic Falls that he and Sarah raised four children, although they had none of their own.

"Times were hard then," he says. "Instead of getting an increase in salary every year, teachers got pay cuts. So I got out of it. For 16 years I didn't teach. My brother owned

land in Otisfield and Bridgton, so I worked in the woods. I knew I could always get a carpenter's job."

Pottle helped construct several log cabins in the area during that time, when builders' wages were \$4 a day.

It was in the early 1940's that John Pottle entered politics.

"We had come back into town (Otisfield) by then," he recalls. "I felt I had to help out."

He was elected selectman, starting 16 years in that job, and also served one term in the 91st Legislature, representing the district then comprised of Otisfield, Harrison and Windham.

"There was nothing about the (Augusta) political job that I wanted," Pottle says. "I came home every weekend."

He was offended somewhat by power struggles among legislative factions competing for recognition. His next logical step would have been to seek an appointive position, but he just wasn't interested.

Sarah interrupts to say that politics, for her, is "disgusting." She commends her husband for never bringing the town's business home with him the way many die-hard selectmen do.

By 1953, Pottle had decided to get back into teaching.

"At that time I was going on 60 years old. I had 18 years of teaching toward a pension. Salaries were better."

He accepted a job at Casco High School teaching Latin, French and history. He taught there nine years, moved to Oxford High School for another four, and retired from teaching altogether in 1967.

Since so many years of his life have been spent in schools, Pottle resents the fact that small towns no longer have much to say on running their schools or on many other matters which used to be within their control.

"The small town is gradually losing power to determine its own destiny," he laments. "We have nothing to say about the schools, if we're lucky enough to still have schools at all."

He also resents the townspeople being taxed "excessively" in order to pay salaries of Washington bureaucrats. He bemoans state control over road standards and governmental welfare red tape.

Although he did not instigate the drive himself, Pottle supported Otisfield's bid to secede from Cumberland County and join

Oxford County in protest over the town's share of the new Cumberland Count Civic Center. Otisfield residents don't want to be taxed for a building they will rarely use.

A self-taught surveyor of sorts, Pottle believes that land no longer truly belongs to the people who own it. There are just too many state laws dictating what can be done with the property, he says.

Pottle knows his town so well that he can trace some property lines established before he was even born. He can back-track for generations of ownership to tell you what the land looked like when Otisfield was comprised of neatly-arranged 100-acre lots.

In his heyday, he walked hundreds of miles of stone walls for landowners who never hesitated to use Pottle in lieu of a lawyer when their deeds were drawn up. He still researches land titles today but has given up walking the boundaries.

What he does still do, at 82, is manage the Elmwood Cemetery, including mowing lawns and assisting in grave preparations. (He has at one time or another been custodian of each of the town's 12 graveyards.)

John Pottle is a faithful patriarch — respected, trusted and appreciated by all. Having served 12 terms as a selectman, he has helped his fellow citizens understand such complicated state and federal guidelines as shoreland zoning, subdivision reviews, tax assessments and valuations.

He is proud of Otisfield's ability to keep its identity despite the decentralizing effect of increasing state and federal dictates. In fact, the people of Otisfield say it's largely because of Pottle that they have been unable to keep what they describe as the "delightful qualities" of their small country town.

Pottle's tireless devotion to the needs of the town have brought him the status of Town Manager, the function of Town Father and the honor of Town Historian, all rolled into one.

So, it seems only natural that when Article One of the the Town Warrant is brought to the floor of this year's Town Meeting, that someone will rise and, as has happened more than forty times in the past, place in nomination the name of John Pottle to act as meeting moderator.



# Finlandia

by Sandy Wilhelm

Since Jacob Mikkonen's accidental landing at the South Paris railway station nearly ninety years ago, the Finnish community has made its mark on the Oxford Hills.



The early history of West Paris is packed with names like Drake and Berry, Young and Howe. There is not a Pulkkinen or Heikkinen among them.

The 1902 town register makes barely a mention of any Finns.

Yet, in less than 90 years following Jacob Mikkonen's accidental landing at the South Paris railroad station in 1890, the Finnish community has left an indelible imprint on the Oxford Hills.

The Finnish attribute of *sisu* — a mixture of rugged determination, assertiveness and just plain guts — served the latter-day

pioneers as well and won them the admiration and respect of their Yankee neighbors. It was a trait particularly suited to the wood and farmland of inland Maine, where decaying homes and barren fields abandoned in a zealous urban and westward migration, awaited refurbishing in the early 1900's.

Life was hard for the early Finnish settlers; but, for residents of areas around West Paris, at least, hard work eventually paid off. People prospered on restored farms and in the woods, setting up a sophisticated farmer's cooperative to market their goods,



*Church Congregation, 1918*

establishing the Finnish Congregational Church and introducing neighbors to such foreign commodities as Finnish saunas, dark bread and mid-morning coffee breaks.

Jacob Mikkonen, grandfather of state representative Jake Immonen of West Paris, was the first Finnish arrival. Dissatisfied with his work in Quebec City, Mikkonen hopped a freight south one day in 1890 and found himself unwittingly unloaded at the South Paris station. He made his way on foot to the small West Paris settlement (which, until 1957, operated as part of the town of Paris) where, the story goes, he spotted a

wood pile and an ax and immediately began chopping to earn food and shelter.

Because it happened to be a Sunday, Mikkonen's work was abruptly halted by the farm's inhabitants, who explained the Sabbath was, for them, a day of rest. But, the industrious 40-year old foreigner, with his broad face and square jaw, apparently impressed West Paris townspeople. It wasn't long before he was given a job as a woodsman with one of the many crews working the West Paris area.

He scrupulously saved his income until he

was able to buy a modest farm on High Street and then began sending for relatives living in the small town of Kuhino in east central Finland, about half way up the Russian border. First to follow were a niece and nephew. Eventually, two entire branches of the Mikkonen family arrived, along with part of a third branch. (Like many of his fellow Finns, Mikkonen found his name to be cumbersome and chose to change it finally to McKeen.)

By 1918, about 90 per cent of the area's Finnish population had been drawn from the Kuhino area, as the pattern begun by Mikkonen repeated itself again and again. Newly arrived, mostly young and male, the Finns saved wages earned at jobs on farms and in the woods to buy places of their own which they restored; and then, when they could afford it, sent for relatives to join them there.

For the Mikkonens and the hundreds of others who were to follow in the years prior to the outbreak of World War I, America was the land of opportunity. Their Finnish homeland, under czarist rule, had been beset by heavy crop failures. In addition, many of the young men were out to avoid mandatory conscription into the Russian army. Still others objected to the rigid tithe system demanded by the homeland Lutheran church.

They were drawn instinctively to the rolling hills of Maine's rugged interior because of the area's similarity to their native land. The mining and mill towns, timber and farmland which gave them the chance to do what they knew best, lured them north from ports at Boston and New York until, at the outbreak of World War II, they numbered about 3,000 strong in Northern Cumberland and Oxford counties.

Most, like Immonen's father Lauri, known to many as "King of the Finns" for the prominent part he played in the West Paris community, were hardly more than boys when they arrived. The elder Immonen settled in West Paris in 1904 and bought a farm four years later. Farmer, woodsman, church-goer and businessman, Immonen was a mainstay of the Finnish community. Because he had a good command of the English language, he served as interpreter and mentor for many of those who did not, transporting them to and from doctor's and lawyer's appointments, and supervising their other dealings with the non-Finnish



*Jake Immonen poses with his sisu sticker*

population.

Immonen was instrumental in establishing two institutions which were to become focal points for Finnish life during the first half of this century — the Finnish Congregational Church and the Farmer's Cooperative.

The Finnish Congregational Church was founded in 1907, after the Congregationalist home office in Portland was convinced of the wisdom of establishing a mission in West Paris in an abandoned hall on Church Street. The community's choice of Congregationalism stemmed, in part, from a lingering bitterness over the Lutheran home church's tithe procedures during depressed times, and, in part, from the Congregational Church's willingness to respond to the mission call when others would not.

The appearance of Rev. Alexei Reita in 1915 sparked the church's "great awakening" and for the next 25 years things thrived. Services were held in Finnish each Sunday, with parishioners drawn from as far away as Sumner and Greenwood. There were neighborhood sewing circles held at the church and an occasional auction, where women's handiwork was sold to boost

church coffers. The church sponsored a summer school where children learned the language and traditions of the homeland.

Although the Finns were not known as an outgoing, gregarious lot, the church Christmas parties and summer picnics, with their rice pies, fish in pastry and famous coffee breads, were always well attended.

In 1922, the church hosted the annual Finnish Church Convention, drawing hundreds of church members from Maine coastal settlements at Port Clyde and Rockland, the mill and quarry towns of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and upstate New York's rolling farmlands.

At its most active, the church ordained five Finnish ministers in a single year.

Of equal social significance was the Farmer's Cooperative, established in 1922 as a way of distributing goods in a truly democratic fashion on the model of cooperatives which had met with some success in Finland. In theory, the cooperative operated by selling a limited number of shares to each member (usually 10) and, regardless of the number of shares held, allowing each person only one vote in deciding business affairs. ("That way,

nobody got to be a big shot," explains Jake Immonen, who managed coops for many years, including a branch office of the only one which still survives at Fitchburg, Mass.)

Goods were sold at the going market price, with the division of any profits among members determined at the end of the year according to the amount of purchases made. Members were paid an interest rate on their investment. Day-to-day proceedings were supervised by a board of directors.

Although the West Paris cooperative, like many others, was plagued by intermittent management problems during its 48 year life span, it performed a valuable community service, particularly in its early years. It started at a time when West Paris was a thriving agricultural community. The Bates Railway Station, which had sparked the settlement in the mid-1800's, had grown into one of the busiest stops between Portland and Vermont. Milk was hauled to the trains daily. Pulpwood cut during the winter months was yarded at the station awaiting shipment. Apples picked and packed each fall left from the station for ultimate European destinations.

In the midst of all this, the coop operated  
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Anna Mikkonen Immonen with husband, Lauri, and one-year-old son Jacob

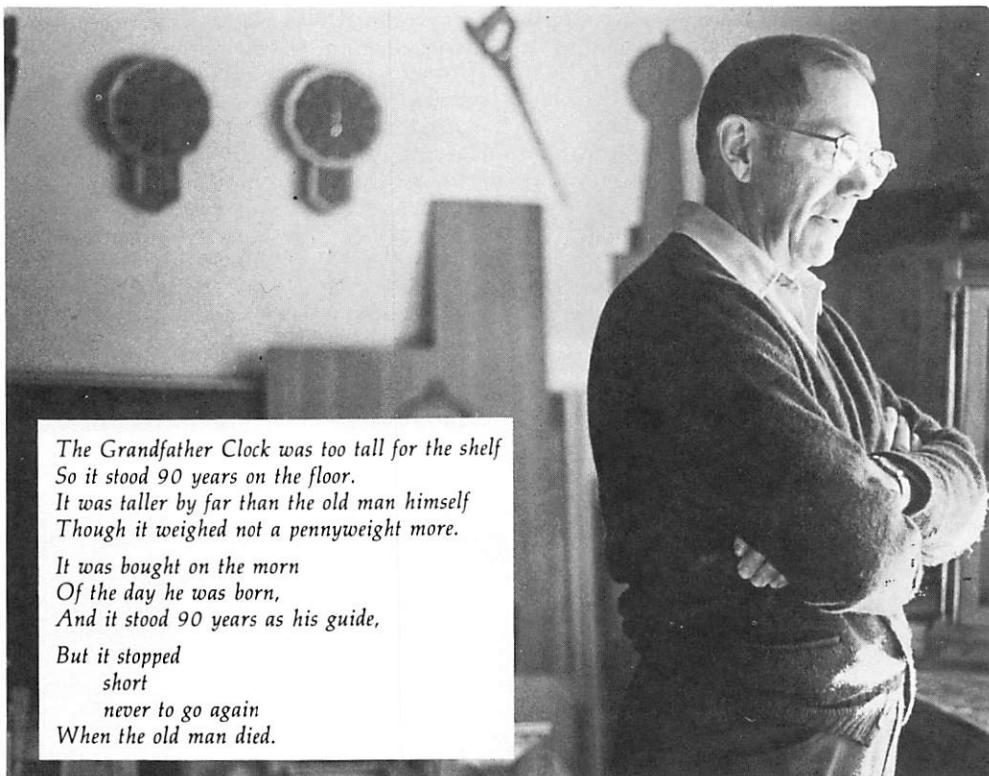
# Making It

Edward Arthur Woodworth:

## Woodworking The Long Way

Edward Arthur Woodworth

by Pat White Gorrie



*The Grandfather Clock was too tall for the shelf  
So it stood 90 years on the floor.  
It was taller by far than the old man himself  
Though it weighed not a pennyweight more.  
  
It was bought on the morn  
Of the day he was born,  
And it stood 90 years as his guide,  
  
But it stopped  
short  
never to go again  
When the old man died.*

Most of us have heard the grandfather clock song at some time in our lives. Perhaps it's with the song that our romantic feelings about clocks began. For there appear to be few among us able to pass a beautifully-crafted clock by without stopping to admire its design and perhaps sampling its silken finish with reverent fingers.

Clocks, like people, are made to be loved. Edward Arthur Woodworth makes clocks. Banjo clocks, steeple clocks, one-of-a-kind clocks, too.

Woodworth makes other fine furniture, as well: reproductions of antique Hepplewhite and Sheraton chests and tables, Tambour desks which represent 200 hours of his time, gentlemen's shaving mirrors and smoking stands; even a bedroom suite for his daughter. But it is the clocks that you keep coming back to.

Is it because they have faces and hands and a "heart" that ticks? Maybe their appeal lies in their muted voices: the chimes that echo, with gentle regularity, the bells in distant England's Westminster Abbey or the cathedrals of Wittingdon or St. Michael's, filling the silence like a child's sweet song.

Woodworth feels that part of the emotional appeal of clocks lies in their ties with our past.

"In America, grandfather clocks were the first status symbols. They were among the first pieces of really fine furniture our forefathers produced. Authentic antiques have become tremendously valuable and expensive. They are also very hard to find, so there is a growing demand, now, for copies.

"You know, some people think today's young people are frivolous, but I have found that many of them are searching for their roots, which is, perhaps, why they love old things: things that represent a time when workmen cared about what they did and put a lot of pride and love in their work. These young people have a yearning for beautiful things that will last, things that they can hand down to their children as heirlooms.

"We might have been a 'throw-away society' at one time, but I think values are changing, improving, and in a way, we're moving backward, to some of the better things.

"The revival of the floor clocks is only part of a larger revival of crafts and quality workmanship going on all over the country. This is wonderful to see. Americans are finally growing tired of junk; of having to replace things every time they turn around. They're tired of cheap furniture held together with staples and covered with plastic veneer. Most of it is made so poorly it can't even be passed from brother to sister, much less from generation to generation."

Woodworth knows whereof he speaks. He has had a love affair with wood since he was a little boy holding the lantern in the dark shed where his father worked with a few simple hand tools, fashioning tables and chairs for the family.

"There were seven of us boys and all of us were good with our hands," he recalls.

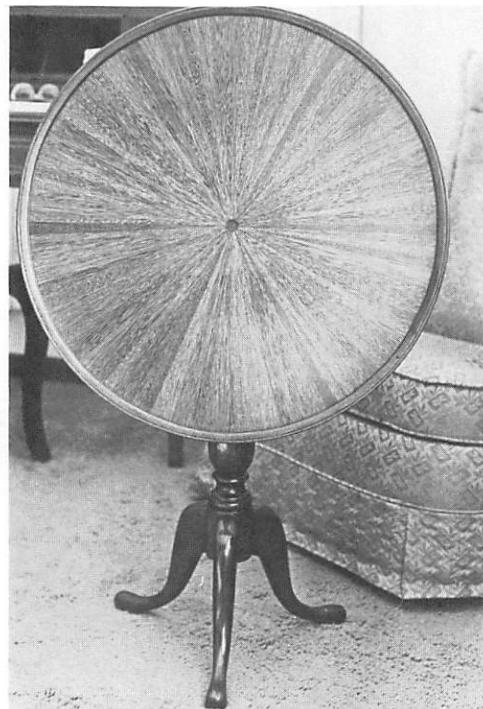
At age 14 he made his first piece of furniture (which he still has): a smoking stand, charmingly original in design, since he used whatever material he could find — old piano keys for the inlaid ivory design, discarded drawer fronts, and the lid off a treadle sewing machine.

Later, as a young man, he left the Oxford Hills area after working for awhile as a refinisher in a Norway furniture store, and went to Portland, first to the Walter Corey Company which carried some of the finest furniture available; and then, after fire forced Corey's closing during the Depres-

sion, to Porteous, Mitchell and Braun, where he remained 33 years until his retirement three years ago.

At Porteous, Woodworth restored and refinished valuable antiques. In his own shop, he built "from scratch" more than a hundred items of furniture, almost all of which were either given away to relatives or friends or sold in the store.

When his children were small he often bought damaged furniture from the railroads and refinished it, in order to bring in extra family income.

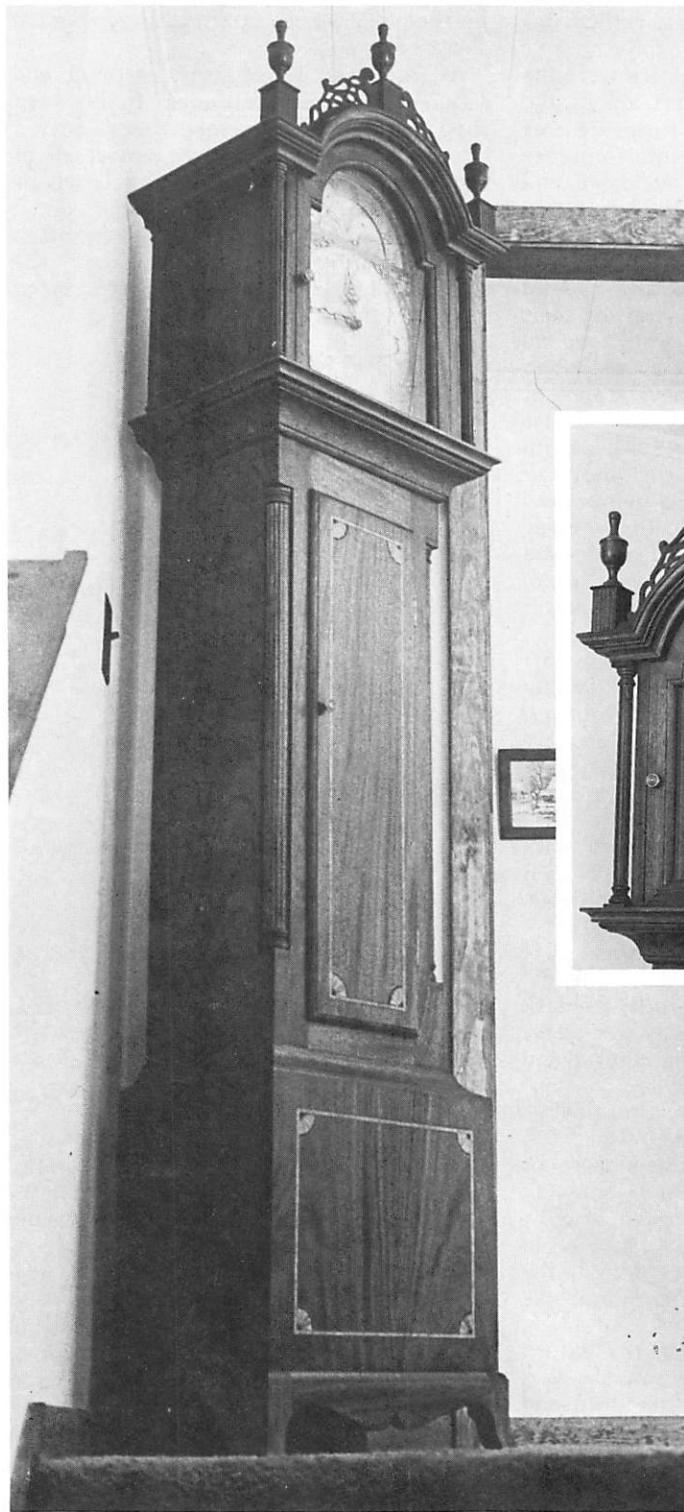


*Mahogany Tilt-Top Table*

"There are no shortcuts," Woodworth will tell you. "I'll admit it, I take pride in my work. I don't mind doing things the long way."

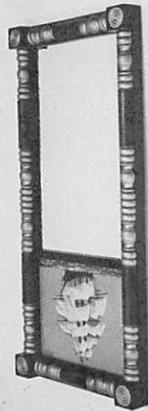
"The long way" might mean building up table legs piece by piece, creating solid inlays that extend all the way through the wood rather than being simply gouged out. There may be as many as four different woods in one leg: mahogany, white holly, ebony and rosewood.

"I love doing inlay," says Woodworth, amiably. "Crazy modern designs don't interest me much. I think most of them are fads. Five years from now they'll look ridiculous, like short skirts."



*Mahogany Grandfather  
Clock - an Aaron Willard copy*

Temple Mirror of pine,  
finished black and gold



Rosewood Steeple Clock



Mahogany Lady's Desk

"I don't go for distressing, either, especially on fine woods like mahogany. Except for pine. I never worked too much with pine, maybe because there was always so much of it available in Maine; but in recent years I made some pine pieces for a special customer, and, you know, it has a quality all its own that I kind of like now. And it's the only wood I know that looks better after it gets dented up a bit."

Woodowrth is back in his native area now, living on Pikes Hill in Norway with plenty of relations nearby to drop in on weekends. Rita, his wife, thought she would miss Portland unbearably, with its stores and symphony hall and its proximity to the sea. "But I'm having a ball," she'll tell you, "entertaining Arthur's people. There isn't time to miss anything."

Besides, it's beautiful there on that wooded hill. And Woodworth has the best shop ever, in the basement of the couple's new home. Most of the time, that's where you'll find him, warmed by his little coal heater, light streaming in the huge front windows onto the worktable where his hand lovingly strokes the grain on a sheet of Australian lacewood, which in turn catches sunlight and bounces it back onto his glasses.

Around him are neat piles of other veneers: crotch mahogany from Africa, ("... beautiful for drawer fronts"), Indian rosewood, holly. He sands a bit of satinwood to demonstrate its fragrance.

"Doesn't it smell delicious?" he asks, expectantly. "Just like maple syrup." And a child's grin lights up his gentle face.

He settles at his bench to apply another coat of varnish to an Eli Terry clock case which has already had one coat of stain, one coat of pastewood filler and sanding sealer, and four previous coats of varnish.

"I don't like urethane. It doesn't have the flow or body. But, do you know, real varnish is getting impossible to find? Most companies have stopped making it."

He worries about things like this, and about disappearing arts like the burnishing of bronze ("... with tools made of agate").

At one time a furniture craftsman could count on such things, but not any longer.

When the last coat of varnish has dried, Arthur Woodworth will rub the finish long and thoroughly with pumice and oil. He meant what he said. There will be no shortcuts. The little boy who held the lantern has grown up to be a master.



# Folk Tales



Harold Howe

In 1920, Harold Howe began the trucking business which he maintained for thirty years. His first truck was a G.M.C. with hard rubber tires and a speed of twenty miles per hour.

In those days bridges were built to handle horse and buggy and many of them collapsed under the weight of the heavy truck load. Howe was told by the selectmen he would have to get a lighter truck, but he insisted big trucks were the coming thing and were here to stay so that stronger bridges would have to be built to stand this weight.

In spite of having only one arm due to a childhood accident when eleven years old, Howe could do anything a man with two arms could and more than many an "average man".

He and his helpers loaded many thousands of feet of lumber by hand. Through the years, he not only hauled lumber, but also moved buildings and barrels of apples and, at times, even livestock.

During the winters of the thirties, Howe operated a snowplow for the town of Waterford.

After retiring from the trucking business,

Howe went into business with his two sons, Ted and Bill, operating bulldozers and a sawmill business. Many woodlots were cut over and the wood hauled to various mills by the three Howes and many of the camp roads in and around Waterford were built by Howe and his two sons.

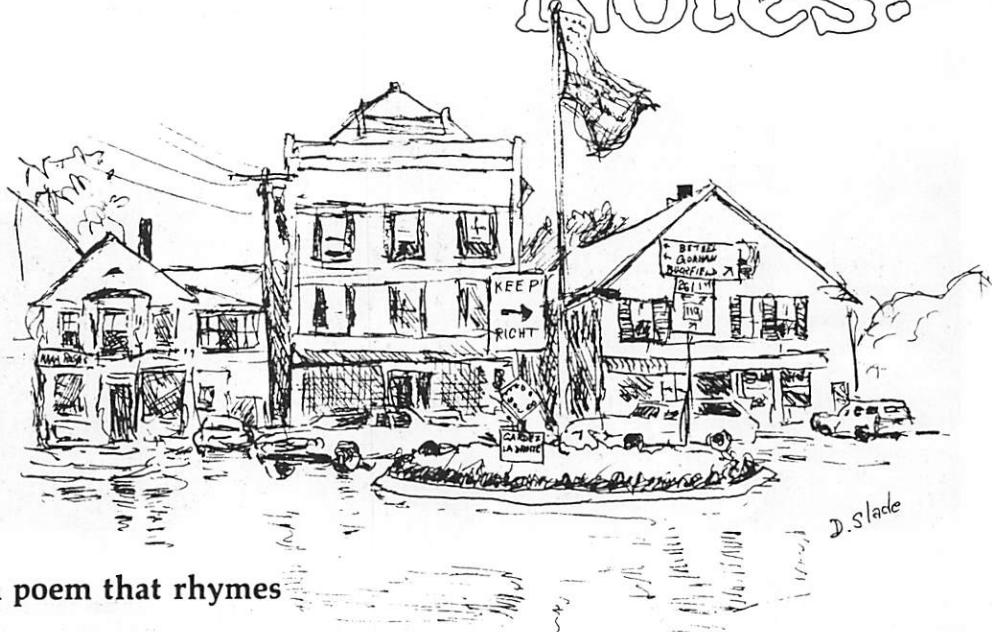
Howe is now retired from any active work and lives quietly with his wife, Mildred in the house which he built in 1916 on Howe Hill in Norway where he was born. Their five children, Theodore, June (Starbird), Eva (Record), Paul (Bill), and Jean (Grover) live near by enough so the couple is able to see and enjoy their many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Harold and Mildred recently observed their 64th Wedding Anniversary.

M.H.

BitterSweet welcomes readers' submission of material for Folk Tales. Write-ups on local friends and relatives should be brief and if possible accompanied by a photograph. Send items to BitterSweet, Box 301, Oxford, Me. 04270.

# BitterSweet Notes



## a poem that rhymes

"Give me a poem that rhymes," chided Harry Walker when he stopped by the office the other day and would up leafing through some back issues of *BitterSweet*.

"That stuff that makes you read and reread just to figure out what's being said isn't my idea of poetry at all," he maintained, with an obvious eye toward the magazine's

### THE FARM

I love the farm and what it means,  
Like burning wood and baking beans.

Rows of sweet corn, lettuce 'n peas,  
Swooping swallows and honey bees.

Fat grazing cows with fuzzy ears  
And restless tails and chubby steers.

Oaken barrels of foamy cider,  
Brown mother hen with chicks beside'r.

Pigs rooting in the rich black earth.  
In the barn a due cow giving birth.

Mows of hay and beams for jumping.  
In the stable a horse a'thumping.

Golden butter from wooden churn  
Richly flavors the bread we earn.

past publishings.

Harry just happened to have in hand an example of what was more to his liking — a poem written, he explained, to capture the feel of his family farm atop Pikes Hill in Norway.

"It might not be great poetry, but at least it's pleasing to read," he shrugged.

Hot biscuits from Atlantic Queen  
Relished with strawberries and cream.

Spring sap boiling in steaming pans  
Turns to syrup for the pancake fans.

Grandma knitting as she rocks  
To the ticking of Thomas clocks.

Junior fishing for trout or chub,  
Bandaged big toe that hit a stub.

Sister learning just how to cook,  
Going by mama and not by book.

Yes, I love the farm and what it means,  
Like work and food and ragged jeans.

Cities can have their crime and thrills —  
I'll take a farm in Oxford Hills.

## revitalizing

Citing congested traffic along Main Street and big city competition for tourist dollars, a Bridgton businessman has set out to revitalize his resort town.

Robert Clark, who opened Jon's Restaurant in Bridgton three years ago, says he's tired of looking at a vacant building across the street from his cafe. He blames the situation on conservative bankers refusing loan money for development.

"We've all got to be willing to gamble," Clark told a citizen's group which has been meeting weekly to look into Bridgton's Main Street problems.

"The community has something different to offer besides a blacktop jungle," he said, complaining that cities that win federal dollars wind up using the funds to lure tourists from towns like Bridgton.

Stymied for years because of the town's lack of a public sewer system, Bridgton businesses say they don't want to pay \$600 a year to hook into a system, even if one is built.

"We'd like to provide lavatories and other facilities for campers," Clark says, "but this town can't afford a public sewer system." Annual operating costs of public waste systems are at least \$60,000, he said.

So far, the revitalization group has split into study committees concerned with the topics of theme and ordinance, utilities, landscape and traffic. A Bangor architectural firm and state transportation officials are being consulted along the way.

"It doesn't have to be a Mount Vernon," Clark said. "If we could just have a green walkway instead of Main Street to separate the stores, I'd be happy."

## woodturning woodburning

The installation of a new, 51,000 pound, 75 horsepower, wood-fired boiler to the J.R. Mains Co. in Bridgton should be complete by this month or next, according to James Mains, Vice-President of the wood-turning mill.

The new addition will save an estimated 90,000 gallons of oil a year by burning the waste products of dry and green sawdust along with some hardwood bark. It will provide the heat required for the entire mill operation including the live steam needed for the drying kilns.

It will take five or six years before the boiler begins to pay back the cost of installation, said Mains.

## FALSE HOPE

False hope  
pops up like golden dandelion  
just to go to seed  
and  
blow away with the  
first stiff  
breeze.

*Georgia Robertson*

# Tasty Ways To Welcome Spring

by Esther L. Smith

In Oxford County, when energy and spirits are at their lowest, there comes a tantalizing late-March day when the air is soft with promise.

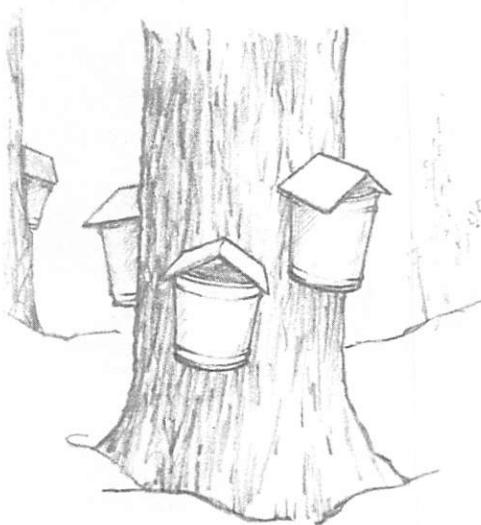
Skies seem bluer. Snow grows spongy. Eaves drip in the full sun, while inside the house, drunken flies crawl from hideaways and bumble against warm windows.

Bouncy chickadees whistle their "fee-bee" spring call and, in a barren rose-hedge, a

Song Sparrow tunes up on a song Thoreau once described as "maids, maids, maids... hang up your tea kettle-ettle-ettle."

One of the most sensuous reasons for loving the change of seasons here in Maine is experiencing the seasonal foods. The delectable spring offerings of maple syrup, freshly-caught fish, garden-dug parsnips, dandelion greens and assorted homemade wines are enough to waken many a weary taste bud.

## Inroads



Many people begin it all by tapping trees, gathering the maple sap for use in either syrup or wine. The trees are tapped in late February and early March, when sunny, above-freezing days and cold nights get the sap running freely.

Holes measuring about two inches deep are dug with a half inch bore into rock, silver, red or black maples at a slight incline (to increase the flow) and on the sunny side of the tree where the sap runs first.

Metal spiles are inserted into the holes to channel the watery sap into pails or plastic milk containers secured at the end of the spigots and covered with foil to keep out bark and dirt.

For maple syrup, sap is gathered daily and strained through cheesecloth on its way into

a large, wide-mouthed pan which is placed over a high flame for boiling down the liquid. The process of sugaring off requires a lot of time and gallons of liquid before the luscious syrup is produced. But, the end result is worth the effort, once it is sampled on top of pancakes, hot biscuits or ice cream.

In general, about 50 gallons of sap will result in one quart of syrup. It will take about an hour to boil down one gallon of the liquid, depending, of course, on the type and intensity of the fire used.

Once the liquid begins to take on an amber color and there is only an inch or two of it left in the bottom of the large pan, it ought to be switched to a smaller container for the final sugaring off. The smaller the pan, the less chance of scorching.

You can tell when the syrup is finally done by its color and taste. The syrup should be strained one last time before being placed in containers.

For a greater, though less immediate return on your time, you may want to try converting maple sap into maple wine, which sidesteps the tedious boiling-down process and results in a gallon of wine for every gallon of sap collected. The robust white wine is delicious and will wind up costing you between \$1 and \$2 a gallon. You'll have to wait almost a year to sample it, however.

You'll need five gallons of sap to start, a small enough amount to be easily collected in one day. The sap should be poured into a larger-than-five gallon (it foams) sterile plastic can or crock, stationed about a foot and a half off the floor so that siphoning can take place.

For each gallon of sap, add 1½ lbs. sugar (a little less for dryer wine) and four special wine-making ingredients, available through special wine suppliers: 1 Campden tablet, 4 tsp. acid blend, ¾ tsp. grape tannin, 1 Tbsp. wine yeast nutrient.

Wrap and tie 1 lb. of yellow raisins (for each gallon of sap) tightly in cheesecloth and place the packet in the mixture.

When the temperature of the mixture is between 65 and 80 degrees (determine temperature by resting thermometer on the

bag of raisins), sprinkle yeast on top. Do not stir. Cover with plastic wrap or crock lid and let it stand.

Wine should begin to actively bubble within two or three days. Stir occasionally to break up any bubbles on top crust.

Measuring the specific gravity of the solution with an inexpensive hydrometer will let you know how the process of converting sugar to alcohol is progressing. When the specific gravity measures 1.040 (usually within 5-10 days), it's time to transfer the solution to a second five-gallon (*glass*) container, where it can be waterlocked (allowing the gas to escape, but avoiding any further contact with oxygen).

A cork with a hole measuring the exact diameter of a six-foot piece of plastic siphon hose is used for the air lock. The plastic hose, inserted in the cork, is used to transfer the liquid from one container to the other after the bag of raisins has been removed from the solution. Be careful not to let the siphon rest on the very bottom of the large container where it could pick up sediment during the

Following the transfer, the level of wine in the glass container should measure within two inches of the top of the jar. If necessary, water should be added to reach this level. Attach a waterlock (ask your hardware store clerk to drill a hole in your cork for you) and let the solution stand about two weeks.

Repeat the siphoning process, transferring the liquid to a second five-gallon glass container, leaving all sediment behind. Attach the waterlock again and let solution sit undisturbed at moderate temperatures and out of direct sunlight for about three months.

When the specific gravity reaches 1.000, it's time to bottle. Transfer the wine through the siphon hose into clean, sterile wine bottles and cork. The bottles should be stored in a cool place for about six months. By then, it will be winter.

Whether you're trying sap or wine, you'll find hard or rock maple trees will be the best sap producers, yielding ten to twenty gallons of sap a season. To avoid damaging the trees, it's a good idea to tap only trees measuring more than eight inches in diameter.

Once sap starts running pale green or yellow and begins to take on a slight odor, it's time to put away the buckets for another year and move on to some other spring taste treat.

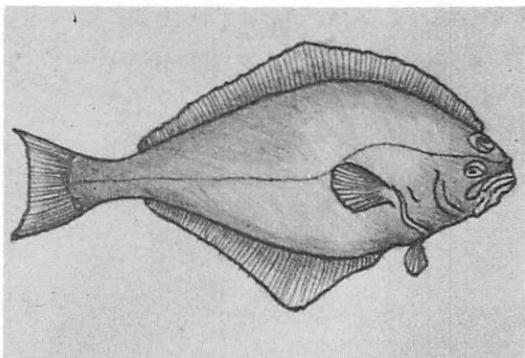
Continued Page 26

# Can You Place It?



Last month's "Can You Place It?" showed a view of the town of Buckfield as seen from Rt. 140 en route to East Sumner.





A sure sign of springtime is the appearance of succulent brook trout, which is cleaned, dipped in corn meal and fried in an iron spider with salt pork or lard. Well-browned, the fish has a unique flavor.

Lucretia Douglas of West Baldwin says she gets a jump on the spring season by preparing fish caught through the ice on any of the area's many lakes. A favorite from nearby Sebago Lake is cusk. Usually caught late in the day, the fish is unattractive to look at, but delicious to devour, says Mrs. Douglas.

The fish is skinned, and the fins along the backbone are removed. It is best cooked up into a hearty fish chowder. To serve four, you will need:

1½ to 2 lbs. cusk (or substitute haddock)  
4 med. potatoes, peeled and cubed  
(approximately 4 cups)  
1 lg. onion, peeled and finely chopped  
4 stalks celery, finely diced  
1 lg. can evaporated milk  
3 cups milk  
2/3 stick butter  
salt, pepper, paprika to taste

Barely cover fish and potatoes with water and 1 tsp. of salt. Boil gently until fish flakes and potatoes are tender.

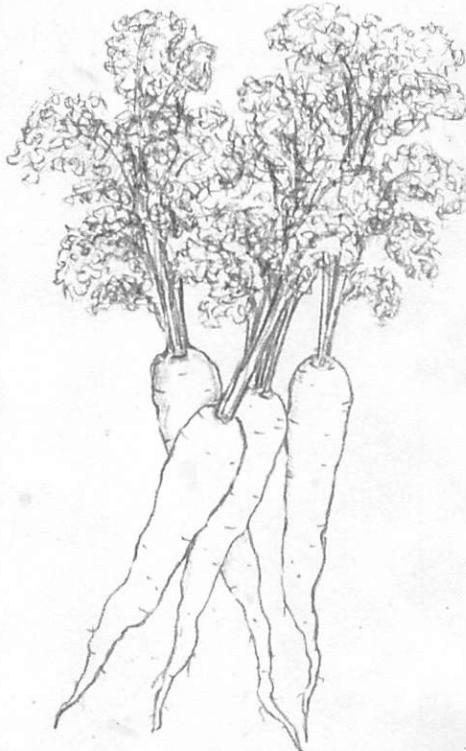
Meanwhile, saute onions and celery in butter until golden on low heat. Add to fish and potatoes. Simmer together about 10 minutes, then add milk. Season with pepper, paprika and salt to taste.

Turn off heat and let chowder rest until flavors are well blended. It is best to make the chowder in the morning and heat it up for supper. Serve hot with crackers.

Just as soon as the garden is spadable, sweet parsnips are dug. The parsnips, planted the spring before, have spent the winter snuggled in the ground, gathering flavor. They are tasty in stews, boiled and covered with butter or raw-fried in butter to a brown crustiness in a heavy skillet.

A friend passed on her way of making parsnip stew. The aroma from a kettle mulling on low heat brings springtime right into the kitchen. She didn't specify quantities, so you can best use your own judgement.

Slice and peel freshly-dug parsnips and boil in just enough water to cover. When barely tender, boil down the liquid a bit and



add a dollop of butter. Pour in as much rich milk as desired. Add a pinch of salt and a bit of sugar (important to the flavor). Let stand and season before serving.

If a more elaborate dish is desired, there is the following parsnip recipe found in *Dorcas Dishes, A Little Cookbook of Country Cooking*, published by Kate Douglas Wiggin in 1911. It contains favorite recipes of the Dorcas Ladies of Hollis and Buxton, Maine, where

Kate lived. It reads:

Escalloped Parsnips — cut cold, boiled parsnips into dice. Put into a baking dish in layers, with crumbs, parsley and grated

cheese in between, having crumbs, cheese and butter on top. Pour over a little cream sauce and bake until brown.



The first green leafy edible to appear above ground each spring is the jagged dandelion green, a welcome harbinger of garden greens to come. "A good mess of greens" is considered a delicious tonic and people invade fields and lawns to gather them soon after the last snow has disappeared, being careful to select only tender plants which have not yet blossomed. The greens are carefully washed several times before cooking.

Some cooks still hold to boiling the dandelion greens in water along with a hunk of salt pork. Others find them equally good dressed with butter after plain cooking.

The greens may also be converted into wine. A neighbor, Theresa Kozlowski, gave

me the following recipe, which was passed on to her back along by a German gentleman in Ohio. Those who have sipped the wine pronounced it "superb." Here it is:

1 quart blossoms  
1 gallon hot water  
Add cut up lemons and oranges, to taste,  
probably two of each  
4 pounds of sugar.

Let stand 14 days, stir every day. Take out blossoms and fruit, and let stand until clear. Bottle, leave uncovered 6 hours before sealing (so it won't blow up!).

These ingredients may vary, according to personal taste.

Jaded winter appetites are guaranteed to perk up with such fare.



# Goings On

## MUSIC

LAKE REGION HIGH SCHOOL CHORAL FESTIVAL: March 16, 8 p.m., high school auditorium, Bridgton.

THE VIKETTES, JR. VIKETTES & VIKING VOICES: March 14, 7:30 p.m., South Paris Congregational Church.

CHORALIERS SPRING CONCERT: Palm Sunday, March 19, 7:30 p.m., South Paris Congregational Church. Gabriel Faure's *Requiem*, directed by Evelyn Young with soloists June Sawicki, Jeannie Berger and Peter Allen.

POST PORTLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION WINNER: March 22, 8 p.m., Bates College Lounge.

JOHN DARENKAMP, BARITONE: March 20, 8:15 p.m., Lewiston Junior High School Auditorium.

THE BATES COLLEGE STRING QUARTET: with John McLaren, guitarist, April 8, 8 p.m., Hebron Academy's Halford Lounge.

OXFORD HILLS HIGH SCHOOL, JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL & ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BAND JAMBOREE: April 17.

## ART

MARINE ART OF THE KENNEBEC REGION: Bates College Treat Gallery through March 26. Gallery hours: Mon.-Fri. 1-4 & 7-8 p.m./Sun. 2-5 p.m. Free admission.

ART SHOW: Oxford Hills High School Library March 30-31.

HUPPER GALLERY: Hebron Academy. STUDENT EXHIBIT through April 8. JON BROOKS (carved wood furniture) and MONA BROOKS (clay sculpture) April 9-May 6. Gallery hours: Weekdays 9-5 p.m./Sun. 2-5 p.m.

## THEATRE

THE THREE SISTERS by ANTON CHEKOV: Bates College's Schaeffer Theatre, March 16-19 and 23-24, 8 p.m. Admission \$2.50.

OLIVER: directed by Benny Reehl, at Oxford Hills High School Auditorium March 30-31, April 1 at 8:00 p.m.

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PILLARS OF SOCIETY by HENRIK IBSEN:  
excerpts directed by Nancy Marcotte, April 7-8,  
7:30 p.m., South Paris Congregational Church.

#### SPECIALS

PARENTING ADOLESCENTS: a five-week course sponsored by Oxford County Counseling Center, Wednesday evenings March 29-April 26. For information or enrollment, call 743-6725.

LAKE REGION JR. HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIR: March 17, 3-8 p.m.

TO LAUGH, PERCHANCE TO DREAM: Theatre at Monmouth's first-ever Spring Tour, performances and workshop bookings available, with special Shakespearian study guides, April 1-May 31. Booking fees are negotiable. For information call (207) 782-9784 or write Theatre at Monmouth, General Offices, 124 Lisbon Street, P.O. Drawer 3047, Lewiston, Me 04240

# Sweet Finds

## Wood Ashes

If you are fortunate enough to have wood to burn this winter, don't forget to save your wood ashes for your garden. If you don't have a garden, the ashes are very beneficial spread on your lawn.

Just before plowing or roto-tilling your garden this spring, spread a light coating of lime (ground limestone) along with your ashes on top of the soil. You will find crops like beets, cabbage, and especially onions, respond with vigor.

The ashes and lime will also control slugs.

Lucretia Douglas  
West Baldwin

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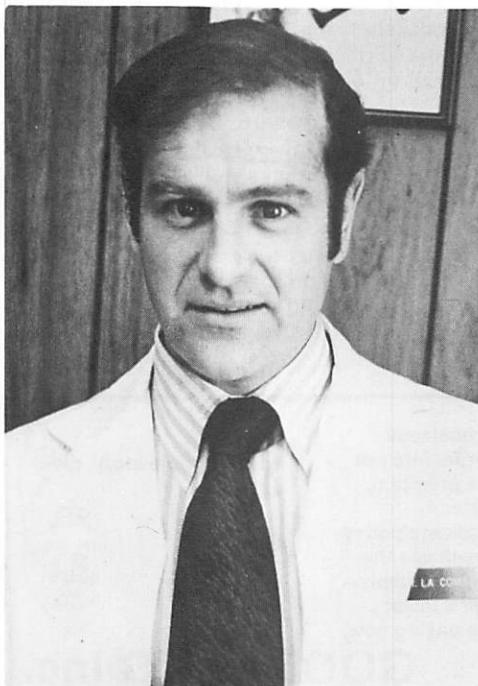
### Men's Casual Wear

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- Campus
- Career Club

# Medicine For the Hills

## Consumerism In Medicine

by Michael A. Lacombe, M.D.



Dr. Michael Lacombe

How much alcohol does it take to destroy your liver? What's wrong with a penicillin shot for the flu?

Which drugs are dangerous for your children under any circumstances? Can you trust any doctor not to prescribe them?

Are all "doctors" really doctors? What's the difference between a chiropractor and an osteopath? How do you choose a doctor and how can you tell if he's good? Should you ever switch doctors?

Does teething really cause a fever? When do "gas pains" signal heart attack? Is oral sex abnormal? How often should you have a

check-up? What do black bowel movements mean?

These are questions of some importance, concerns which are certainly every bit as vital as choosing the proper garden vegetables or deciding on the right spot to dig a well.

Nearly every Mainer can recite the virtues of various woods and wood stoves, the mechanics of drafts and stoking, and the methods of snuffing out a chimney fire. People have acquired knowledge enough about the subject to act responsibly. As a result, there are few housefires, and no one freezes to death.

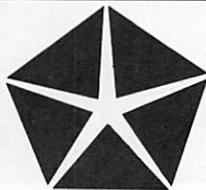
Yet these same people know very little about the health of their own bodies. They shop around for the cheapest doctor. They take their blood pressure medicine for only three months and consider themselves cured. They count on giving their kid a set of dentures for his twenty-first birthday, as a matter of course.

Even among otherwise well-educated people, there are very few who could adequately answer all the questions posed above. Even some doctors couldn't do it. And yet, the answers ought to come as easily as, say, brushing our teeth.

There are some societies, such as Sweden and Denmark, which are medically quite sophisticated, where a system of free health care works quite well because people have been taught to take good care of themselves. But Americans have not been schooled, and they do not take care of themselves. They eat and smoke far too much, consume alcohol far in excess, and get no exercise. (If you run three miles a day, you will get more exercise than ninety-nine per cent of all Americans—a shameful statistic.)

That we Americans are medically uninformed is partly the fault of us doctors. Doctors allow themselves to get too busy to take a moment to talk to patients. We, frankly, grow tired of offering the same explanations again and again, and the malpractice hoax has all but destroyed our credibility.

Part of the blame, though, rests with you as well. You are all too willing to give your doctor the total burden of responsibility for yourself: "Make me thin," "Stop my smoking," "Give me health," "Cure me." You might just as well demand that your oil man turn down your thermostat, split your wood



# BESSEY MOTOR SALES

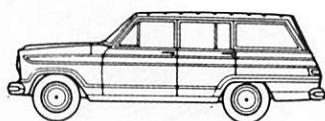


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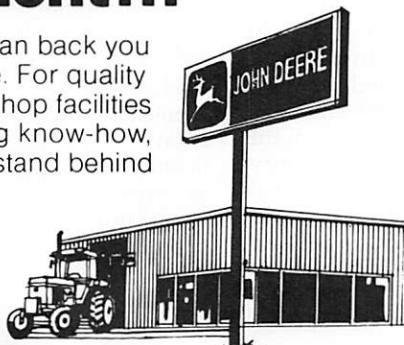
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Some of the blame also rests with health educators and health care providers. Hospitals have not been inclined to teach communities about health care. Nurses, accustomed to a more passive role, have feared assuming an active part in teaching their patients. Health courses in high schools have, in the past, focused mainly on the anatomy of the frog, and the mating habits of seaweed.

The Kellogg Foundation (Rice Krispies, etc.) has responded to the need for a more coordinated community effort in health education by granting money to Norway's Stephens Memorial Hospital and to S.A.D. #17 to help promote better health education throughout the Oxford Hills area. From this effort has emerged the recent community-wide instruction program in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), a noble attempt to make lifesavers of one in every six Oxford County residents. Since the CPR program began last fall, there has been a vast improvement in even the performance of the

hospital staff during a cardiac arrest. Everyone, it seems, can stand to learn.

Which brings me to the point of this article. While organizing this community-wide health program, it was felt that an effective teaching tool would be a monthly column on health topics. This is it.

Each month, "Medicine For The Hills" will focus on factual information about a particular medical topic. Although I feel entitled to occasional opinions of my own, this will not be an opinion column; nor will it be an "answer-the-question" column, although from time to time, submitted questions will be answered where appropriate.

The idea really is to promote healthy "consumerism" on the part of readers regarding total health care — to tell you how to shop, what to look for, what to buy, what to expect for your money, and, most importantly, when and how to "do it yourself."



# Ayah

We consider your comments and suggestions an important means of discovering our readers' interests. Representative and appropriate letters will be published as space allows. Most likely answers won't be necessary, and probably the only response you'll receive will be a most appropriate "Ayah!"

## Good Memories

One of the nice things about having people visit you from Maine is that they usually bring you a little something. The little something Molly and Merle Glines brought us this time was *BitterSweet*.

Ed and I couldn't put your lovely magazine down 'til we had read the last and final word. It filled us with good memories of people and places we both remember.

Ed and Jean Francis  
Aua, Hawaii

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**NEXT MONTH:**  
**A LOOK AT**  
**SISU IN ACTION**

*Rev. Alexi Reita,*

*Lauri Immonen and John Pulkkinen*

as an oldtime one-stop general store, selling farm supplies and oil, hardware and clothing and, at its height during the 40's, doing about a quarter-of-a-million dollar-a-year business.

The store was also a social outlet — a gathering place where people felt a part of the proceedings.

"I remember an old bench set up by the store where pipe smokers and cigarette smokers would meet for general discussions of topics ranging from local happenings to Russian politics," recalls Hugo Heikkinen, a town selectman, who served as coop secretary for 27 years.

The cooperative also sponsored popular family picnics and an occasional dance where a lively *schottische* folkdance was performed to the strains of accordian and violin.

As local farm activity began to wane, there were no longer the numbers of farmers needed to support the store and stock began

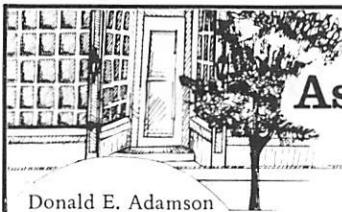
to switch from the grains and fertilizers which had formed the backbone of the original business to groceries and hardware for the consumer trade. By 1970, business had fallen off so badly that the coop was dissolved entirely.

Not long after, the Finnish Congregational Church changed its name to the Mission Congregational in an effort to make a more ecumenical appeal and perhaps bolster its badly declining number of parishioners. Services were eventually switched from Finnish into English.

"The Farmer's Cooperative, the Finnish Church — they are things that have gone by now," says Immonen, who regrets that fact that his fourth generation children will not experience the heritage which both institutions embodied. "But, the people they served have gone by, too."

"Times have changed for Americans and Finns."





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## You Don't Say

### ILLNESSES

Today  
we call a sudden illness  
a virus.  
Back in Grandpappy's day  
such sudden attacks  
were known as the epizootic.

*Georgia Robertson*

### THE ONE ABOUT BEN CHANDLER

Who says Father Time has no sense of humor? It's admittedly a bit dry, like Maine humor, and always delivered with a straight face, so if we don't pay attention we may not get the joke. And just because it's on us doesn't mean it isn't funny.

The other day I was snowshoeing around Paris Hill. There's an old road that emerges from the woods near the Academy building, and I followed it down a steep hill (hopping out of the way of shrieking sledgers) to Granny Pond. The road turns left a little past the pond, but if you clamber up the snow drift and continue straight ahead, as I did, you will discover that the way goes on.

The word "road" is a little deceptive here. In most places the path is barely wide enough for three men to walk abreast, and the low-hanging branches of the bordering trees make it passable only to snow machines, cross-country skiers, or an occasional snowshoer.

About a half-mile from the top of the hill I came upon a structure that looked like a stone picnic table, on top of a knoll alongside the path. I picked my way through the bushes and over a wall to have a look at it. When I knocked off some of the snow I saw there was writing on the stone, and I melted a thin layer of ice with my hand to see what it said.

It was a gravestone. The gentleman who lay in the tomb was the Hon. Benjamin Chandler, who had died in 1827. There were words about his wife, and more below those, but my freezing hands kept me from reading

them. I felt inclined to take off my hat to this man who had chosen to be buried in such a peaceful and solitary setting, but instead I put on my gloves and continued my walk, until I came out on what used to be Route 26.

When I got home I went to the best local history reference I knew — my great-aunt, aged ninety-three. "Tell me about Benjamin Chandler," I said.

"Benjamin Chandler... oh yes. He was before my time. A doctor, and a judge too. I think he served in the legislature... of course, Maine was part of Massachusetts then. He was buried on the main road into Paris."

"The main road?"

"Yes. Well, it isn't the main road any more, of course. The road they use now was just woods then. They say he wanted to be sure that everybody saw his grave, so he had it put where no one could miss it."

She chuckled. She got the joke.

It wasn't a thigh-slapper, mind you. I don't know if jokes are supposed to have morals, but I have a hunch you could find one there if you looked hard enough.

John Alexander

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# Dog Power: One Man's Answer to the Energy Crisis

by Pat White Gorrie

"Hiiii!" That's Bud (Clarence) Tyner's "call of the wild," once he has his five Siberian huskies hitched up and ready to go. (He never yells "Mush!" unless he wants cream-of-wheat for breakfast.) Wife Beverly jumps into the sled seat and away they go, flying over frozen fields like Santa Claus over

rooftops.

Amak, Kimo, Blackie, Taboo and the lead dog, Jula, usually "gee" (bear right) and "haw" (bear left), and stop and start when they're supposed to, but occasionally the dogs are quicker than Bud's eye and he ends up wrapped around a tree before he can call out a command.

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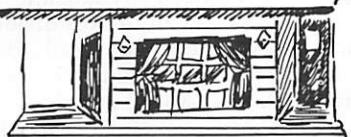
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Beverly Tyner and friend

### VIDO'S PALETTE

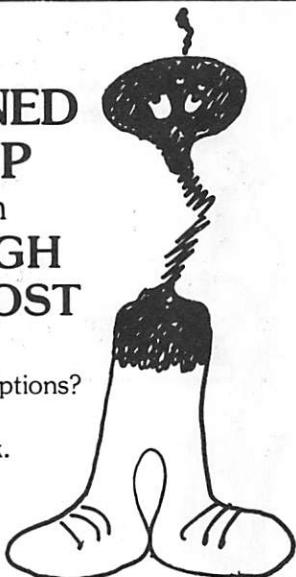


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### ALL BURNED UP with HIGH COST

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Chuck.



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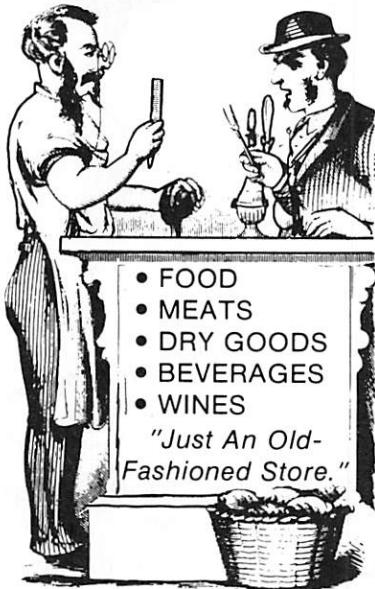
# Country Way

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Oxford, Me. - 539-4403



"One time the dogs went flying over a washed-out snowmobile bridge and I ended up in chest-deep freezing water. Didn't have time to drown, though. They kept on running and dragged me right out again."

Bud bought his first huskies a few years back and began breeding them; finally, through trial and error, developing them into a team. Welding half a dozen dogs into a harmonious unit is no easy task. You start out by selecting the most alert and frisky puppies, but there's no guarantee they'll grow into good sled dogs. Strength and stamina mean the most. The dogs must be good runners because an animal that can't keep up has to be carried by the others the rest of the way.

"Some dogs are just plain lazy," Beverly says. "They might be fit as a fiddle but they'd rather play than work on a team. We've got one that's great at chasing leaves or playing with kids or taking sunbaths. What a dreamer! I guess huskies are like any other working class dog. Some are great at their jobs, conscientious, competitive, jealous of their position on the team. Others are beautiful show dogs, although these two traits can overlap. And others are simply pets. You can't tell how things will work out until you start putting your dogs in harness."

Bud and Beverly started out scrounging for information on dog sledding and at first couldn't find much of anything outside of an old Jack London book. But finally Bud got wind of a few more husky breeders in Southern Maine. And he subscribed to *Team and Trail Magazine*. So now the Tyners are into sledding in a big way. They pamper and feed their dogs for eight months of the year so they can run them for the other four.

The Tyners have an enclosed yard so their dogs are free to run and roughhouse with one another. When Bud finds time he'll make up a wheeled gig so the dogs can pull it for practice in warm weather.

The animals are well treated but not spoiled. The pups get all the dry puppy chow they can eat and the adults are fed high protein dry chow once a day; no table scraps or canned food; plenty of water; and they thrive.

Almost a dozen families belong to the Siberian Husky Club of Southern Maine and when they all get together, it's wild fun (and an occasional dog fight). These are just pleasure rides; there's no competition, though that may come about in the future.

Bud makes the team harnesses himself, out of nylon webbing, although he bought the first one to use as a pattern. The wooden sled is also hand-made, mostly of ash, which is tough and light. It cost Bud under \$50 to construct, if you don't count his "hours and hours" of labor. He even cut down the tree himself. If this sounds like a lot of time and trouble, you should know that purchased sleds run around \$300 and you have to travel to Canada or New Hampshire to get them.

The figure is cheap compared to what some husky fans are willing to spend on a good lead dog — one that will stay on the trail and do what it's told, paying absolutely no attention to falling leaves, hopping hares, deer, skunks, porcupines or anything else. Bud says one lead dog was recently bought for \$2,250 and that many others have sold for as much as \$1,000. But he says he doubts anyone in Maine would spend over \$200 or \$300 for one.

The Tyner's welcome visitors at their place on Route 26, about a mile south of Welchville. They say they'd be glad to pass on information about dog sledding.

And Attu, one of their beautiful, blue-eyed female dogs, will be proud to show you her three new puppies. Believe it or not, they love "mush."

### WHEN I HANG UPSIDE-DOWN

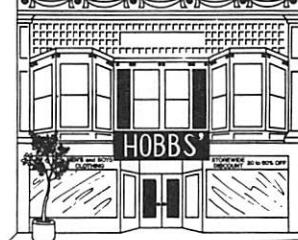
when I hang upside-down  
knees locked  
the trees are falling into the sky  
some  
will bounce on the clouds  
the rest  
it appears  
will just fall into the sky

Winslow Durgin

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It has become entirely clear, the anxiety and frustration which has finally burst into anger. As with every major storm in the past, they must go out and defy it.

I remember, as a child, that anticipation of a big snow storm was filled with excitement, watching the sky turn leaden, waiting for the change in wind which signalled the sighting of the first few snow flakes. How safe it was peering out through the small-paned windows of my Cape Elizabeth home at the vertically falling flakes which gradually grew in number and intensity until they swept horizontally down the street, engulfing everything, turning the woods to an undefined, gray blur.

I snuggled safely and securely in a big leather chair, watching and listening to the agonized groans of the old house standing, now alone, amidst the storm.

After the winds and snow had abated, there was always a bundled-up walk to the shore to see the surf beating against the high stone ledges. Long before we got to the sea, there would be a deep swelling tone, a kind of grinding sound that you not only heard, but felt, along with the muffled sounds of fog horns and bell buoys.

The horizon was still obscured by the remnants of the billowing snow and the churning sea. On the beach, the wet rocks, now black and glistening, withstood the onslaught of the tumultuous waves which struck, jetting up in great geysers and then fell, giving way to others still larger.

There can be tragedy and terror in these great storms. But there is also sublimity — a beauty far different from anything produced by man.

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major storm approaches. They knew, days ahead, that a storm was coming from the messages written in the clouds. They could tell from the silhouettes of mountains against the sky or from the change in the color of the sea. They noted the moods of the wind. They observed the activity of winter birds and animals to tell with certainty that a storm was due.

Then they would sit together, warm and secure, waiting for the storm to end so they could begin the tedious task of clearing away, in order to resume contact with friends and neighbors.

Today, knowledge of the internal combustion engine has lead us to believe that we can conquer anything. We must take cars to our jobs, to the store for food and to a filling station for gas to run our snowblowers and snowmobiles. But, most of all, we must take them to test ourselves against the forces of nature.

It has always been abhorrent to me to find poets and writers personifying these forces by ascribing to them elements of fury, anger or malevolence. Perhaps this remains a relic of our superstitious past. If these powers must be personified at all, better that they be described as indifferent beings which make man remember his tiny place in the universe.

More than 200 years ago, Immanuel Kant drew a distinction between man-made artistic expression which he designated as "beauty" and the phenomena of nature which he described as "sublime." The determination of the aesthetic worth of both was the capacity to produce in their observers the loss of ego — the loss of "I," "me," and "mine." The true aesthetic experience, Kant held, means a momentary lightening of the burden which is self.

It was this experience of which I was deprived during the February blizzard, because of that nagging, wretched knowledge that they were out facing the storm.

But, then again, if it were not for such men, we might never reach the stars.

C. C. Matolcsy

# Real Estate

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earlier this evening

we roasted the kill  
fat fed the fire

the old songs set  
flaming we ate  
until our bellies were full  
now darkness draws tired

the children gnaw bones  
in their sleep the hind leg

of the yearling buck  
the forest barely

alive in the pit  
we sing the old songs  
& in redness dream

hidden by grey ash

*Winslow Durgin*

*Winslow Durgin is a naturalist and writer living in Minot.*

## CORRECTION TO LAST MONTH'S RECIPE:

Last month's recipe for *Custard Corn Cake* should have included one cup of sweet milk. Proper ingredients for the traditional New England favorite are:

1 2/3 cups cornmeal (yellow)  
2 eggs  
1/4 cup sugar  
1/3 cup flour  
1/2 tsp. salt  
heaping tsp. soda dissolved in  
1 cup sour milk or buttermilk

1 cup sweet milk

Mix all ingredients except the sweet milk. *Stir well* into eight or nine inch fry pan which has been placed on the stove and coated with a small amount of sizzling butter. Then slowly add the sweet milk, making sure not to stir. Bake in 350 degree oven for about 30 minutes.

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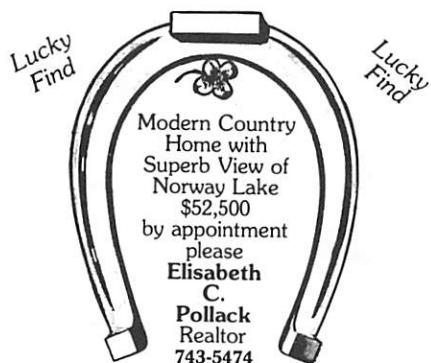


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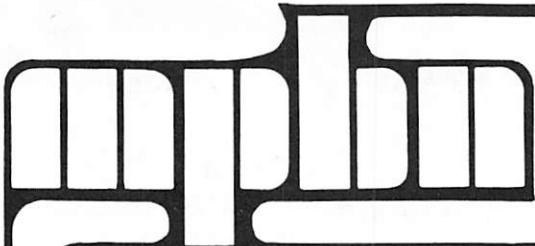
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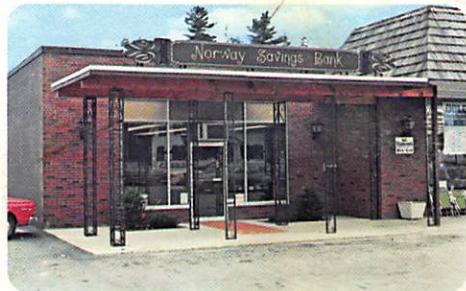
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